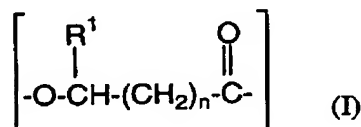


Appl. No. 10/051,723
 Atty. Docket No. 8487M
 Amdt. dated 12/08/2003
 Reply to Office Action of 08/08/2003
 Customer No. 27752

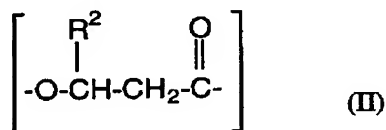
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An environmentally degradable melt spun composition comprising:
 a PLA polymer or copolymer; and
 a polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer comprising at least two randomly repeating monomer units
 wherein a first monomer unit has structure (I)

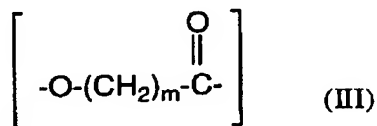


where R¹ is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and
 wherein a second monomer unit has structure (II)



where R² is a ~~C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl~~ C3-C9 alkyl or C3-C9 alkenyl,

~~or the second monomer unit has structure (III)~~

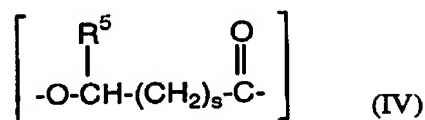


~~where m is from 2 to 9~~

wherein the composition is in the form of a fiber having a diameter of about 30 micrometers or less.

2. (Original) The composition of Claim 1 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer comprises a third randomly repeating monomer having structure (IV):

Appl. No. 10/051,723
Atty. Docket No. 8487M
Amdt. dated 12/08/2003
Reply to Office Action of 08/08/2003
Customer No. 27752



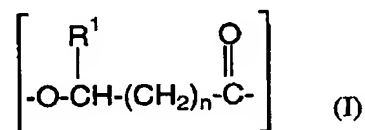
where R⁵ is H, or C1-C19 alkyl or alkenyl, and s is 1 or 2, with the proviso that the third monomer is not the same as the first or second monomer.

3. (Original) The composition of Claim 1 further comprising a second polyhydroxyalkanoate polymer or copolymer.
4. (Original) The composition of Claim 1 wherein the polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer is present in an amount of from 10% to 90% by weight of the fiber.
5. (Original) The composition of Claim 1 wherein the PLA polymer or copolymer is present in an amount of from 10% to 90% by weight of the fiber.
6. (Original) The composition of Claim 1 comprising a PLA polymer and wherein the PLA polymer is crystallizable polylactic acid having a melting temperature of from 160°C to 175°C.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)
9. (Currently amended) The environmentally degradable multicomponent fiber of ~~Claim 8~~ Claim 22 wherein the fiber has two components having a sheath-core configuration wherein the first component is the sheath and the second component is the core.
10. (Currently amended) The environmentally degradable multicomponent fiber of ~~Claim 8~~ Claim 22 wherein the fiber has two components having a sheath-core configuration wherein the first component is the core and the second component is the sheath.
11. (Currently amended) An environmentally degradable fiber produced by melt spinning a composition comprising a polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer and a PLA polymer or copolymer.

Appl. No. 10/051,723
 Atty. Docket No. 8487M
 Amdt. dated 12/08/2003
 Reply to Office Action of 08/08/2003
 Customer No. 27752

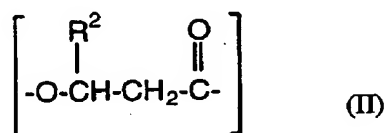
wherein said polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer comprises at least two randomly repeating monomer units

wherein a first monomer unit has structure (I)



where R¹ is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and

wherein a second monomer unit has structure (II)



where R² is a C3-C9 alkyl or C3-C9 alkenyl.

wherein the fiber has a diameter of about 50 micrometers or less.

12. (Original) A nonwoven web comprising the fiber of Claim 1.
13. (Currently amended) A nonwoven web comprising the multicomponent fiber of ~~Claim 7~~
Claim 21.
14. (Currently amended) A nonwoven web comprising the multicomponent fiber of ~~Claim 8~~
Claim 22.
15. (Original) A disposable article comprising the nonwoven web of Claim 12.
16. (Original) A disposable article comprising the nonwoven web of Claim 13.
17. (Currently amended) An environmentally degradable composition comprising a 3-hydroxybutyrate/3-hydroxyhexanoate copolymer and a PLA polymer or copolymer wherein the composition is in the form of a fiber having a diameter of about 50 micrometers or less.

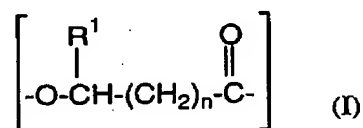
Appl. No. 10/051,723
 Atty. Docket No. 8487M
 Amdt. dated 12/08/2003
 Reply to Office Action of 08/08/2003
 Customer No. 27752

18. (Original) An environmentally degradable bicomponent fiber comprising a sheath-core configuration wherein the core is a 3-hydroxybutyrate/3-hydroxyhexanoate copolymer and the sheath is a PLA polymer or copolymer wherein said fiber has a diameter of about 50 micrometers or less.

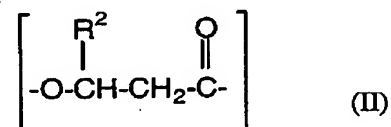
19. (Original) A nonwoven web comprising the fiber of Claim 17.

20. (Original) A disposable article comprising the nonwoven web of Claim 19.

21. (New) An environmentally degradable multicomponent fiber wherein at least one component has a composition comprising:
 a PLA polymer or copolymer; and
 a polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer comprising at least two randomly repeating monomer units wherein a first monomer unit has structure (I)



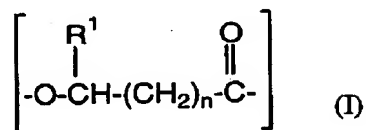
where R¹ is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and
 wherein a second monomer unit has structure (II)



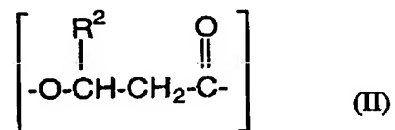
where R² is a C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl,
 wherein the composition is in the form of a fiber.

22. (New) An environmentally degradable multicomponent fiber wherein a first component comprises a polyhydroxyalkanoate copolymer comprising at least two randomly repeating monomer units wherein a first monomer unit has structure (I)

Appl. No. 10/051,723
Atty. Docket No. 8487M
Amdt. dated 12/08/2003
Reply to Office Action of 08/08/2003
Customer No. 27752



where R^1 is H, or C1 or C2 alkyl, and n is 1 or 2; and
wherein a second monomer unit has structure (II)



where R^2 is a C3-C19 alkyl or C3-C19 alkenyl,
and a second component comprises a PLA polymer or copolymer.